

Appl. No. 10/708,305  
Amdt. dated February 09, 2006  
Reply to Office action of December 20, 2005

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

**1. Objection to the claims:**

Claims 5 and 14 are objected to due to informalities.

**5                   Response:**

Claims 5 and 14 have each been amended to overcome the claim objections.  
Acceptance of claims 5 and 14 is respectfully requested.

**2. Rejection of claims 1-15 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b):**

**10                   Claims 1-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hansen (US 3,716,307).**

**Response:**

**15                   Independent claims 1 and 12 have been amended to overcome these claim rejections. Claims 1 and 12 now each recite that "an inner diameter of the second airway is smaller than an inner diameter of the first airway". This limitation is supported in the original claims 6 and 13, and is also fully supported in Figure 1. No new matter is added. As shown in Figure 1 of the instant application, the second airway 18 has a smaller inner diameter than that of the first airway 16. Therefore, a**  
**20                   low-pressure condition is established in the second airway 18, thereby creating the suction effect with the vacuum cup.**

**25                   On the other hand, referring to Hansen's Figure 1, Hansen does not teach that an inner diameter of the second airway 24 is smaller than an inner diameter of the first airway 20. As a result, Hansen's structure is less conducive to establishing a low-pressure condition in the second airway 24. For these reasons, independent claims 1 and 12 are patentably distinct from the Hansen reference.**

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Furthermore, claims 3 and 16 specify that an angle between the second airway and the direction of airflow through the first airway is greater than ninety degrees. This angle also ensures that a low-pressure condition is established in the second airway, thereby creating the suction effect with the vacuum cup.

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On the other hand, Hansen does not teach that the angle between the second airway and the first airway is greater than ninety degrees. Instead, Hansen shows in Figure 1 that the angle is equal to ninety degrees, which does not produce as good of a low-pressure condition as would an angle of greater than ninety degrees.

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In addition, Hansen does not teach that the "air outlet is capable of being blocked by a finger to modify outflow of the air flow from the air outlet", as is recited in claims 7 and 14. Having the air outlet capable of being blocked by the finger allows the low-pressure condition of the vacuum cup to be changed, thereby releasing the vacuum cup from any surface it is in contact with.

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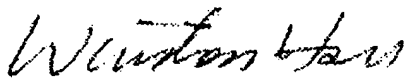
Moreover, claims 2-5, 7-11, and 14-16 are dependent on claims 1 and 12, and should be allowed if claims 1 and 12 are allowed. Reconsideration of claims 1-5, 7-12, and 14-16 is respectfully requested. In view of the above arguments in favor of patentability, the applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

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Sincerely yours,



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